

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 12677

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (LEONE, GIOVANNI)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT LEONE'S VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES

1. IN PREPARATION FOR HIS FORTHCOMING TRIP TO THE UNITED STATES, PRESIDENT LEONE CALLED ME TO THE QUIRINALE FRIDAY EVENING FOR BROADRANGING DISCUSSION COVERING ASPECTS OF THE VISIT AS WELL AS CURRENT DOMESTIC MATTERS (REPORTED SEPTEL).

2. I FOUND PRESIDENT LEONE TO BE VERY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE VISIT AND SINCERELY LOOKING FORWARD TO IT. FROM HIS CONVERSATION, IT WAS APPARENT THAT HE HAD DONE MUCH READING ABOUT THE PRESIDENT. I TOLD HIM THAT THE PRESIDENT'S OPENESS, FRANKNESS AND ENGAGING PERSONALITY WERE VERY MUCH LIKE HIS OWN AND THAT THIS WOULD ASSURE THEIR GETTING ALONG VERY WELL TOGETHER AND HOLDING SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS IN A WARM AND FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE.

3. WITH REGARD TO THE TALKS, PRESIDENT LEONE EXPRESSED A DESIRE THAT THEY BE AS SUBSTANTIVE AS POSSIBLE. HE RECOGNIZED HIS CONSTITUTIONAL LIMITATIONS BUT FELT WITH FOREIGN MINISTER MORO'S PRESENCE, THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NO REASON WHY THE TALKS SHOULD NOT BE CONDUCTED ON A HIGH SUBSTANTIVE LEVEL. HE INTENDS TO PARTICIPATE FULLY AND FRANKLY ON ALL ISSUES OF SUBSTANCE. TWO IN PARTICULAR WILL BE THE NATO SITUATION IN WHICH PRESIDENT LEONE IS
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DEEPLY INTERESTED (HIS NEXT VISITOR WAS DEFENSE MINISTER

ANDREOTTI REPORTING ON HIS VISIT TO GREECE) AND THE QUESTION OF PCI ENTRY INTO THE GOVERNMENT TO WHICH HE IS FIRMLY OPPOSED AND EVEN WITH THE CONSTITUTIONAL LIMITS ON HIS OFFICE, CAN DO MUCH TO PREVENT ITS HAPPENING.

4. THE PRESIDENT SAID HIS OFFICE SENT TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY A DRAFT OF A STATEMENT OR DECLARATION THE ITALIANS PLAN TO PROPOSE RELEASING AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE TALKS IN WASHINGTON. HE INDICATED THAT SINCE FONMIN MORO OUT OF ROME UNTIL SUNDAY EVENING, WE COULD EXPECT THEIR DRAFT MONDAY OR TUESDAY LATEST.

5. WE CONCLUDED OUR CONVERSATION WITH RESPECT TO THE TRIP BY HIS ACKNOWLEDGING APPRECIATION FOR US SUPPORT OF THE IMF APPROVAL OF A \$316.7 MILLION DRAWING BY THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THIS WAS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE KIND OF ASSISTANCE THAT ITALY PRESENTLY NEEDS AND FOR WHICH THEY LOOK TO THE UNITED STATES. HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT HIS VISIT WOULD ENHANCE PROSPECTS FOR SUCH COOPERATION AS WELL AS FURTHER STRENGTHENING THE GOOD WILL AND CLOSE TIES WHICH EXIST BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES AND PEOPLE. VOLPE

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